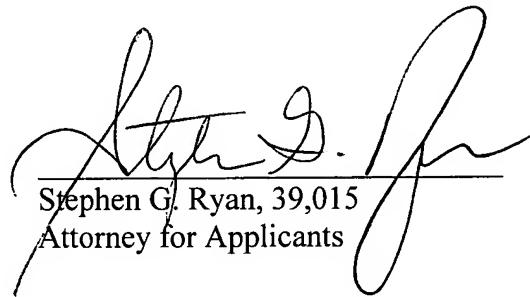


present application is a continuation. All of the publications cited in the International Search Report are listed on the attached Information Disclosure Statement.

Applicants respectfully assert that all amendments are fairly based on the specification, and respectfully request their entry.

Respectfully submitted,



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Claims (marked-up version showing amendments)

[CLAIMS]

What is claimed is:

1. (once amended) A process for the deprotection of an Ac- and/or tBu-protected thiol in the absence of a silyl chloride which comprises reacting said protected thiol with an acid in the presence of an oxidising agent at a temperature sufficient to effect deprotection and generation of disulphide bonds.
2. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said acid is trifluoroacetic acid.
3. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in [either one of claims 1 or 2]claim 1 wherein said oxidising agent is DMSO.
4. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 3]claim 1 wherein deprotection is effected using a TFA/DMSO mixture comprising 1 to 20% DMSO.
5. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 4]claim 1 wherein said protected thiol is present in a peptide.

6. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in claim 5 wherein said peptide comprises at least two tBu protected thiols and/or at least two Acn or MBzl protected thiols.
7. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 6]claim 1 wherein tBu protected thiols are deprotected at room temperature.
8. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in [any one of claims 1 to 7]claim 1 wherein Acn or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 30°C or above.
9. (once amended) [A]The process as claimed in claim 8 wherein Acn or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 50°C or above.